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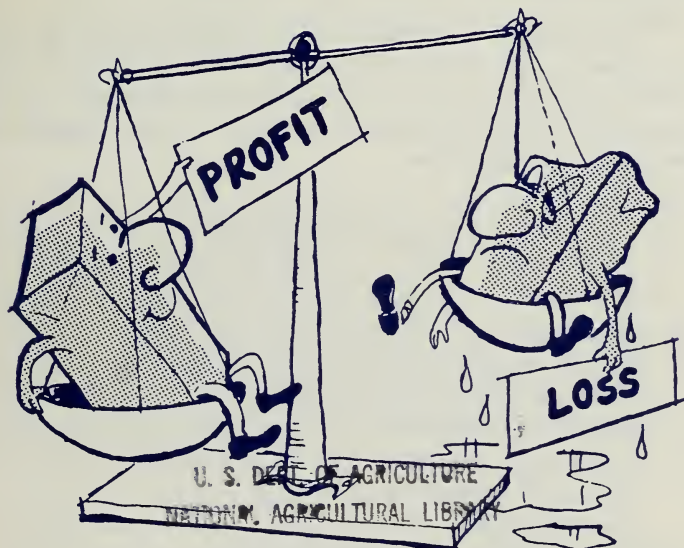
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# Frozen Food...



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This leaflet has been prepared as a guide for personnel handling frozen foods in modern retail food stores. It contains suggestions on how store managers and employees can increase sales and profits from frozen foods by improved maintenance of quality, handling efficiency, and turnover rate.

This leaflet is designed especially for use in the educational programs conducted with food retailers by the Cooperative Extension Services of the State Universities.

The material contained in this leaflet is based on research conducted by the Transportation and Facilities Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service, and by the Western Research and Development Division, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

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## TO THE MANAGER

*Are you getting the profits from frozen foods that you should?*

Frozen foods are quality foods. From the moment of harvest until they reach you, the quality has been carefully protected. If you handle frozen foods correctly, the customer in turn receives a quality product. Selling quality frozen foods means higher sales and rapid turnover. Higher sales and rapid turnover represent profits. Are you getting the profits that you should from frozen foods? Use this leaflet as a guide to quality frozen foods and higher profits.

### Assign Responsibility

Just as in the other departments of a modern food store, the first requirement of a good frozen food department is to make one person responsible for it. In many stores, the frozen food department does not require a man's full time; nevertheless, one person must be assigned the responsibility of ordering, stocking, rotating and the care and cleaning of the frozen food displays and storage. This individual must also have the authority to direct those who may be assigned to help him from time to time.



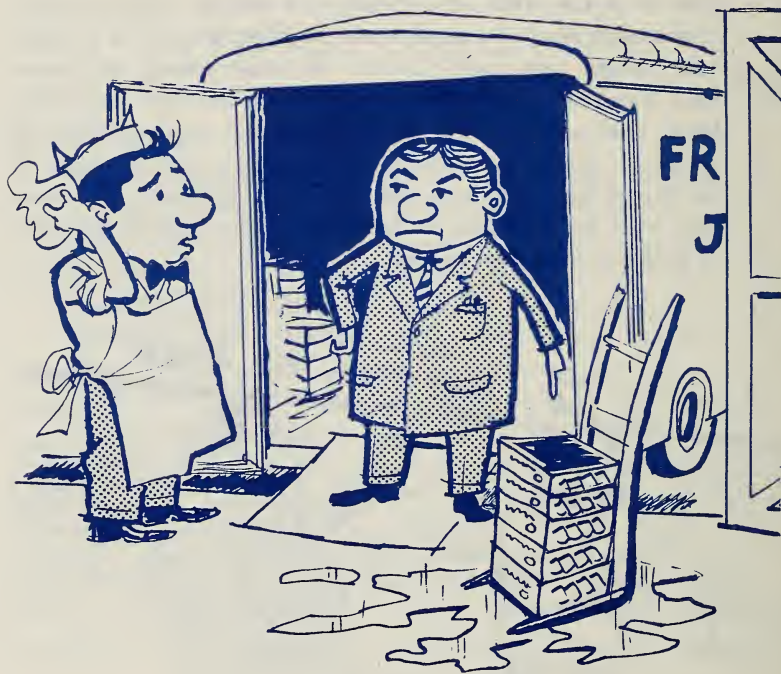


## Instruct Carefully

Take the time to be sure that the person assigned the responsibility of the frozen foods department knows his job thoroughly. Indicate to him the place of his department in the "big picture" of the overall store operation and his relationship to the other store employees. Many "personnel problems" can be avoided entirely by proper initial explanation and indoctrination concerning the job.

## Check His Work Regularly

Many problems can be "nipped in the bud" if a manager periodically checks to see that the job is being done properly and effectively.



**REMEMBER ... THE SMART MANAGER ASSIGNS RESPONSIBILITY; GIVES CLEAR, CONCISE INSTRUCTIONS; AND FOLLOWS THROUGH WITH PERIODIC CHECK UPS.**



## TO THE FROZEN FOODS MAN

The production and distribution of frozen foods is an exacting job. Many skills and technical know-how have been combined to provide the customer with high quality frozen foods.

The product that you are responsible for reflects in its quality all its past treatment. If the handling is good, the quality remains the same. But if the frozen food is mishandled, the quality is lowered. Each mishandling results in lower quality and in customer dissatisfaction.

Correct handling will result in better sales and higher profit. Your responsibility is to make this come true!

### *IN ORDER TO GET ...*

- *MAINTENANCE OF TOP QUALITY*
- *FAST TURNOVER*
- *GOOD PROFIT*

### *ALWAYS REMEMBER TO ...*

- *KEEP FROZEN FOODS AT ZERO*

Do you realize that a ten degree rise in the temperature of the food can more than double the rate of breakdown of the food? The higher the temperature, the faster the breakdown. At zero or below, you'll be selling quality frozen foods! Remember that letting a package of frozen food warm to a temperature of twenty-five degrees for just one day is worse than using a pack more than a year old. Once damage is done, it cannot be undone by kind treatment. But getting the temperature back to zero as soon as possible will avoid further damage. Covering the frozen foods case at night helps maintain low temperatures and helps to cut costs of electricity.

## RECEIVING DELIVERIES

- Be ready for the load

Your store, the distributor and the quality of the frozen foods you are responsible for will all benefit if you are ready to receive the load. Be ready for the delivery and have space available for the load.

- Segregate items that can go directly into the display case

In most stores, many of the items can be put directly into the cases. This reduces the amount of handling and decreases the amount of storage required in the "big chest". Of course, it is necessary to have a good system of checking and ordering to do this.

- Unload the order quickly and get it back under refrigeration

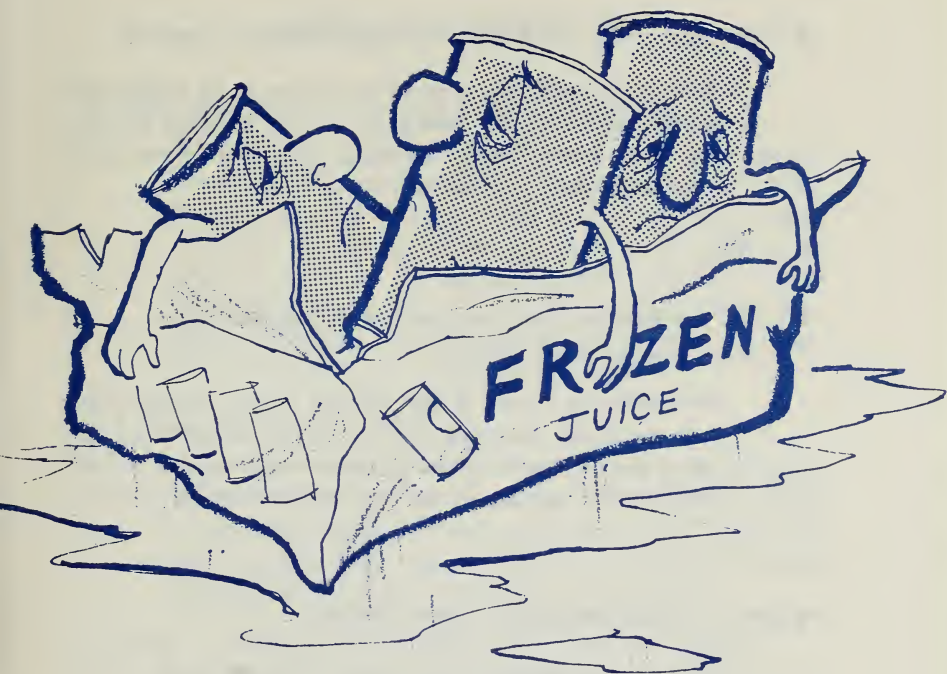
Exposure to high temperature can mean, in addition to quality loss, a harder job of price marking and a strain on your refrigeration equipment if frozen foods are exposed to room temperatures for very long.

- Don't stock the merchandise too tightly into the case

Naturally you want to use all the available space in your display case (there's plenty of competition for space!) but displays which are too tight take considerably longer to stock, make it difficult for customers to obtain the merchandise, and often result in torn packages and bent cans.

- Stack cartons closely together

When you do this, there is little or no air space left between cartons and this reduces the chances of thawing. When thawing is minimized, quality is maintained, and reduced frosting makes price-marking easier.



## HANDLING IN ZERO STORAGE

- Segregate merchandise as it is put away

Time is your most costly item; and a lot of time is lost in searching for a particular case in a disorganized storage. Orderly storage freezers, with merchandise stored by commodity groups, have reduced handling time by one third in many stores. Cold weather clothing for employees helps promote orderly storage.

- Keep case labels visible or mark visible ends of cartons

This will save you a lot of time when you go to get a particular case and it will also mean the door is open for a shorter period and that you don't have to wear extra clothing every time you go to stock.

- Push carts into the walk-in storage freezer to unload

This may sound like a minor point, but it is easier and quicker to handle the case this way and it helps to keep the temperature down. Loading the cases in the right order helps speed up the unloading.

- Load the cart so merchandise put on the cart last will be put on display first

This reduces travel at the display case; and remember that anything that you can do to reduce the time the cases are exposed to room temperatures, is going to help maintain the quality of the product that you are selling.

- Don't collect antiques in your freezer

Even at zero degrees, the quality of frozen foods slowly deteriorates. When packages are lost or misplaced, or a particular item is badly over-ordered, they are usually stored too long and quality suffers. This can result in lower sales and smaller profits.

**KEEP THE FREEZER CLEAN AND FREE OF ICE**

**BECAUSE ICE ...**

- CAUSES EXTRA HANDLING (USUALLY BY YOU)
- MAKES THE EQUIPMENT "WORK HARDER"
- CUTS DOWN USABLE SPACE
- INCREASES OPERATING COSTS



## CARE OF THE DISPLAY CASE

- Check the Display Case at least twice a day

All display cases need checking at least twice a day even if they don't need to be restocked that often. Normal customer handling, even in slow periods, messes displays. Checking allows you to note stocking needs and if the case is functioning properly. Defrost - don't accumulate more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of frost. Most cases have built in thermometers but they're no good if you don't look at them ... and at regular intervals.

- Handle full or half cartons only

Plan your stocking so that you do not have to handle individual packages or return part cases to the storage freezer. When you have to handle less than half a case, you not only make it more difficult for yourself but you increase the chance of damage to the packages.

- Make a written list of needs as the case is checked

You always do this, you say? Maybe you do, but it's surprising how many frozen food men try to remember what they need. Many stores use a regular inventory sheet for this as well as for preparing their order.

- Straighten out and "police" the cases while you are checking

Another "common sense" point, but important because it not only helps you to get an accurate picture of what you have in the case, but it also makes it easier when you are actually restocking. If there is a package of spinach on top of packages of beans, it is hard to tell which items need restocking. This may mean unnecessary work, constant confusion, and lost sales.

- Watch for damaged items and remove them

It only takes one damaged package to affect adversely the sale of a whole stack and even affect total frozen food sales.

- **Keep price signs clean and up to date**

This benefits the checkers as well as the customers. Illegible prices cause delays at the checkout and reduce sales. Also, studies indicate that customers are less likely to buy when they cannot read the price signs.

## **PRICE MARKING**

- **Use a good stamp set and keep it clean**

This is another good habit that will make your work easier and will speed up the operation all along the line.

- **Price the whole case at once on the frost-free inside surfaces**

Surfaces of packages and cans which are not against the outside of the case tend to be frost-free when first opened. Almost all cases can be split so that the inside edges of all the packages are exposed; and these can be priced before frost forms.

- **Price the packages quickly**

The longer that a package is exposed, the more trouble you are going to have with frost formation.

- **Price in the back room if possible**

- It can be done faster in the backroom

- You aren't blocking traffic in front of the display case

- You can arrange a better "set-up" for your tools and equipment

- It is easier to use the price book or list. Mistakes can cost you money

- The ink on the price marks has time to dry



## STOCKING AND DISPLAYING FROZEN FOODS

- Rotate

Be sure that older merchandise is sold first. "First In-First Out" is the principle to follow.

- Combine rotation with stocking

Move the older stock up front or up top when you police the display and when you do the actual stocking. Rotation helps prevent accumulating of "antiques" and promotes turn-over.

- Display at least half a row of each item

This avoids handling less than half a case at a time when stocking and avoids having items covered up.

- Use dump displays when feasible

Fast-moving items can often be featured in a dump type display. This saves stocking time and also may increase the sales of the item.

- Stock Items in Order

Stock in the order in which items are in the display case. This saves steps and time. It also means less exposure for the frozen food.

- Allocate space on basis of sales

Check on product movement and adjust display space accordingly. Rate of sales justifies the position and amount of space allocated.

- Don't block the case with carts or empty cartons

Anything that stops or slows customer traffic in front of your display cases may lower your sales.

- Get the case up to the display

This makes your job easier than if you stock from the floor or the truck. It also reduces the time the frozen food packages are exposed to room temperatures. When stocking, place the case on the display cabinet.

- Use both hands in stocking the cabinet

Lift the packages from the case two or three units at a time with one hand. Then transfer them to the other hand in the right position to be placed in the cabinet.

- Keep displays below the "Fill Line"

Display cases are often over-filled to get more items into available space. This reduces quality. Cabinets are not designed to keep food frozen when it is above the "Fill Line". It is essential to keep stock below the "Fill Line" to maintain quality and condition.

- Use dividers

- Stocking is much easier
- Cases are kept much neater
- Rotation is simplified
- Customer buying is easier
- Mixing stock is avoided
- Space is often saved (by keeping packages exactly over the ones below)

- Service Freezers on Regular Schedule

Set up and maintain a regular schedule of maintenance for the display cabinet. Proper maintenance can save many dollars. Breakdowns may mean heavy losses in thawed food.

## R E M E M B E R !

### *WHEN RECEIVING ...*

- Be ready for the load
- Segregate items that can go directly into display cabinet
- Stack cases closely together
- Unload the order quickly and get it back under refrigeration

### *IN THE STORAGE FREEZER ...*

- Segregate merchandise as it is put away
- Keep labels visible or mark visible ends of cases
- Push carts into walk-in type freezers to load or unload
- Load the cart so merchandise put on last will be taken off first
- Keep the freezer clean and free of ice

### *ON DISPLAY ...*

- Check the display cabinet at least twice a day
- Handle full or half cases only
- Make a written list of needs as you check the cabinet
- Police the display cabinet while checking stock
- Watch for damaged items and remove them

## R E M E M B E R !

- Keep price signs clean and up to date
- Keep display cabinets clean and free of ice

### *WHEN PRICING ...*

- Use a good marking set and keep it clean
- Price the whole case at once on the frost-free surfaces
- Price the packages quickly
- Price in the backroom, if possible

### *WHEN SETTING UP THE DISPLAY ...*

- Use dump displays when feasible
- Keep displays of at least half a row
- Don't stock merchandise too tightly in cabinets
- Don't backtrack... service as you go
- Don't block the cabinet with carts or empty cases
- Combine rotation with stocking
- Get the case up to the display when stocking
- Use both hands when stocking
- Keep displays below the fill line of the display
- Use dividers when feasible

*KEEP FROZEN FOODS AT ZERO DEGREES!*



● *CHECK THE TEMPERATURE!*

● *KEEP IT AT ZERO OR BELOW!*

● *THIS KEEPS THE QUALITY IN FROZEN FOODS!*







